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VOLUNTARILY THEY WENT TO SHED THEIR BLOOD AND GIVE THEIR LIVES TO SAVE DEMOCRACY

EX-SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN OF OUR DEFENCE SERVICES

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In countries like England, America, Canada, Russia, Germany, Australia and New Zealand, every one goes out of his way to help ex-Servicemen. I remember going to see the world famous Bertram Mills Circus in London some years ago. Every thing went off like clock work. The manager of the Circus attributed this to the fact that the bulk of his employees were all ex-Servicemen. I believe in Germany, – although defeated in both wars, the first consideratian of the authorities is go re-settle ex-Servicemen. In Russia, the Government passed a bill in 1956 granting pensions to ex-Servicemen and women, orphans and other dependents. Every single ex-Serviceman and woman is provided for under this new bill regardless of the length of service of the person concerned. We, in India, cannot shirk this sacred duty to our ex-Servicemen. I, having had the joy, the privilege and the honour of soldiering with our magnificient soldiers in peace and in war cannot and will not forget my duty to them, these grand officers and men who played in my team when I was their captain during the last four years of my life in the Army and who have now left the Service or will leave as time goes on.

Help in kind can be given in many ways. Suitable ex-Servicemen and women can be employed in firms, factories, schools and similar establishments in accordance with their qualifications. Children orphaned by their fathers having been killed in action or dying as a result of wounds received in wars or being incapacitated to work by war wounds, can be adopted by people who are financially well off. Children's Homes can be set up and maintained by private social welfare organisations. Scholarships can be given to children for their studies. Legal advisers and medical officers can offer voluntary and honorary advice and help to ex-Servicemen, women and their families. There are scores of other ways in which this help in kind can be given. Houses and agricultural land can be given to re-settle ex-Servicemen.

In either case, of making financial contributions or giving help in kind, it is very necessary that the bonafides of the ex-Servicemen or women needing help MUST be verified first, because there are many imposters in our country, as indeed there are in other countries too, who go about telling long stories of their suffering in the battle-fields and getting away with the sympathies and help from civilians. So, every person who asks for help must be asked to produce his or her military discharge certificate which everyone is issued with on leaving the Service. Unless this is produced, NO help whatever should be given to people who claim to be ex-Services personnel. Another way of making this verification is through the nearest military authorities and through ex-Services Associations.

There are many other ways of helping the ex-Servicemen. In Australia, the Australian Mutual Provident Society which is a private concern has undertaken to convert nearly half-a-million acres of barren land in South Australia into rich pasture land for breeding cattle and sheep, on. The developed land is divided into one thousand acre paddocks on which are built houses and workshops. Wells are sunk and windmills installed.

I take this opportunity to ask every single ex-Officer, JCO, NCO and Other Rank to become immediately a member of his local Ex-Servicemen's Association – thus giving great strength to "Ex-Servicemen's Cause". Membership of Associations throughout India is most disappointing – only a tiny percentage of our men of the nearly three million ex-Service personnel are members today. This won't do – if ex-Servicemen want to be rehabilitated. It will be easier to get help through Associations than individually. Ex-Servicemen's cases should not be put up – by merely saying "I am an ex-Serviceman – with ... years service" – full details must be given – of Number – Rank and Name, Unit, dates of enlistment and discharge, causes for leaving the Service, Character – details of Service etc etc. Discharge Certificate MUST be produced when seeking help personally.

I appeal to our people to give generously both in cash and in kind to this most deserving cause in the interest of the security of our beloved Mother-land, to help keep our Independence intact for ever.

K. M. CARIAPPA,
General (Retired)
President,
All India Ex-Services Federation.

The "Annexe",
'F' Block, (Ministry of Defence Area)
Hastings Road,
NEW DELHI.

VOLUNTARILY THEY WENT TO SHED THEIR BLOOD AND GIVE THEIR LIVES TO SAVE DEMOCRACY

EX-SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN OF OUR DEFENCE SERVICES

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Appeal by :—

General K. M. CARIAPPA, (Retired),

President,
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1961

The "Annexe",
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Chosen ex-Servicemen are given loans to buy upto a thousand sheep, machinery and so on and are allotted these thousand acre paddocks to settle in. The settlers are to refund the monies spent on the development etc within 28 to 30 years. I know nothing on this gigantic scale can be done for our men but there is the idea. However large areas of similarly reclaimed lands in India can be allotted to groups of ex-Servicemen for collective farming and so on.

Many social workers in Australia, particularly women, organise fetes, fairs and charity sales of clothes and goods collected to raise funds. In our country also, this can be done. Where there is a will, there is a way. People can send old clothes, but not in tatters of course, books, toys and so on, to recognized ex-Services Associations for distribution or for sales. Theatres and cinema houses can make periodical contributions to these funds by having special shows to raise funds for ex-Servicemen. Race Clubs throughout India can have at least one 'Special ex-Servicemen's Race' meeting once a year and the profits at that could be sent to the Ex-Services Federation. In all cases where money is paid, it is best and safe to pay through either recognized Associations or better still through the All India Ex-Services Federation who will see that money is properly distributed amongst deserving cases.

The problem of rehabilitation is of vital importance to the security of the Country. I say vital because the better we look after our ex-Servicemen and their families, the higher the morale of the regular Army will be, because soldiers will then feel that they need have no anxiety nor worry about the fates of their families when they are out fighting for or serving the country. This is a factor which I would like to emphasise very strongly because it is not generally known in our country that our soldiers voluntarily join the Defence Services. They are ready to give their lives in the service of their country. The morale of serving soldiers MUST be kept high always. High

for the millions. Our soldiers answered the calls of the Government of the day in our country, when democracy was threatened and joined up our defence services in thousands, voluntarily, giving up in very many cases, the comforts of their homes, leaving behind their wives and children, in order to sally-forth to battle against totalitarian aggressors. In these battles, some had the good fortune to go to the actual field of battle to face the enemy's bullets whilst others did not have this good fortune. Nevertheless, they all made their sacrifices in their domestic comforts by going away from their kith and kin, their hearth and home, to fight. During their absence from their homes, their small possessions of lands, in many cases could not receive their personal attention and, therefore, when they returned to their homes from wars, they found them not so productive as they had been before they left. At the same time, they found those who did not or could not join the Services, had in many cases made themselves very prosperous by doing business, taking contracts and so on and so forth. Many of our gallant soldiers, and in the last war, some women too, returned disabled, some partly and some totally, having lost their arms or legs or eyes or all of them. Most of them found their children and their wives had not been well cared for in their absence. Many gallant sons of India did not return at all. Their bones and ashes are now littered all the world over on many battle-fields. Many widows and orphans of such unfortunate soldiers are left today unrehabilitated, widows with no means of livelihood and the orphans not getting their schooling for want of money. There are thousands and thousands of these ex-Servicemen and some ex-Service women, jobless today – unemployed – and so, are denied the three essentials which every citizen of our land has a right to have – food, clothes to wear and a roof to sleep under. Very many chidren of our ex-Servicemen, dead and living, are not getting their birth-right, which is good food and education, to prepare themselves to be good citizens of our land. Is this the reward our sons and daughters get for volunteering to fight against enemies of democracy?

VOLUNTARILY THEY WENT TO SHED THEIR BLOOD AND GIVE THEIR LIVES TO SAVE DEMOCRACY

EX-SERVICEMEN & WOMEN OF OUR DEFENCE SERVICES

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In times of war, two are in great demand – one, God and the other, the soldier. When I say soldier, I include, of course, the sailor and the airman. When wars are over, God is often and the soldier is almost completely, forgotten. In times of war, it is the duty of the soldier to make all sacrifices including, if need be, the supreme sacrifice of giving his life, to provide for the security of the civilian to see that the horrors, destructions and devastations of wars are kept away from his doors. In peace time, it is the inescapable duty of the civilian to provide for the domestic security of the solider to see that the horrors of hunger, want and lack of domestic comforts are kept away from the doors of the Ex-Servicemen. Alas, this latter obligation of the civilian is almost totally NOT thought of by people in our country. This is sad and is very distressing.

In the last two great World Wars, our soldiers fought in many theatres of operations where they, by their gallantry, devotion to duty and sacrifices of all kinds, brought great lustre and glory to the name and the people of our country. They were all engaged in combating forces of totalitarianism, in order to save democracy so that people who believed in the principles of ideologies of democracy could live the life of individual freedom. This, our grand soldiers, fighting along-side their comrades-in-arms who had similar faith in democracy, achieved morale in soldiers is a mightier 'weapon' to guarantee the security of our people in times of emergencies than any weapon of destruction they are issued with. Morale will be higher still if they know that when they leave the Army at early ages of their lives as they have to or become casualties, they and their families will not be forgotten. Serving soldiers of today are the ex-Servicemen of tomorrow. Officers and all other ranks in the Defence Services have to go on retirement or discharge at very much earlier ages than the civilians have to in order to make room for younger people, for the Defence Services must have an even flow of young blood always, and "Reserves" have to be built up to help expansion on mobilization in times of National Emergencies.

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Since Independence our gallant officers and men have added more lustre to the great prestige of our Army and have brought glory to our Country by their magnificient, impartial efficient service rendered with firm but humanitarian feeling wherever they have been in the world as members of India's Peace Army. Many of these are now in the rank of "ex-Servicemen". Please do not forget what they did in the "Kashmir Operations" in 1947–1948 and during the "Partition Days".

Our Government has been doing, and continues to do quite a bit, to rehabilitate ex-Servicemen, provide for the education of their childern and so on, but this is only a very small portion of what has to be done.

The main aim of this appeal is to impress upon my fellow countrymen and women the fact that in matters such as this, no Government can tackle this important and very major problem alone. There are nearly three million ex-Servicemen and women in our country – most of them unemployed. People must come forward to supplement the work of the Government in this gigantic problem by making donations and contributions through the many ex-Services Associations throughout our country not only in cash but also in kind. The Government has many problems to deal with. Money is hard to come by. So, I earnestly appeal to our people, who God has blessed with money, to make financial donations very liberally to this great cause. We cannot have too much money to fulfil our inescapable obligations to these grand sons and daughters of our land who left their homes prepared to give their lives, so that others could live, but many of whom were fortunate enough, to achieve their aim without having to give their lives whilst many of their comrades made the supreme sacrifice and are no longer with us, but have left behind them suffering and sorrowing widows and orphans.

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